

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BELGRADE 2507

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SUBJECT: SAUVAGNARGUES VISIT TO BELGRADE

1. YUGOSLAV MEDIA PLAY, INCLUDING A CURTAIN-RAISER
INTERVIEW, MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE BELGRADE VISIT OF
FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES WHICH BEGAN MAY 21
COULD SIGNAL A MAJOR CHANGE IN BOTH THE STYLE AND CONTENT
OF YUGOSLAV-FRENCH RELATIONS.

2. IN HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE TANJUG PARIS CORRESPONDENT,
SAUVAGNARGUES SAID ALL THE RIGHT THINGS TO MAKE THE
YUGOSLAVS HAPPY: FRANCE WANTS FIRST OF ALL TO BE FREE IN
MAKING DECISIONS CONCERNING RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN
COUNTRIES; FRANCE WISHES THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA TO BECOME
A SEA OF PEACE AND LINK BETWEEN CIVILIZATIONS AND PEOPLES
ON ITS COASTS; FRANCE HAS TRIED TO BRING CLOSER THE
STANDPOINTS OF DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON
ENERGY AND RAW MATERIAL PROBLEMS; FRANCE AND YUGOSLAVIA
SHARE A COMMON ADHERENCE TO REAL INDEPENDENCE AND
REJECTION OF THE DIVISION OF EUROPE AND THE WORLD INTO
HOSTILE AND RIVAL BLOCS.

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3. AUTHORITATIVE COMMENTATOR (AND TANJUG DIPLOMATIC EDITOR) VELEMIR BUDIMIR POINTS OUT THAT THIS IS THE FIRST WIDE POLITICAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON A HIGH LEVEL FOLLOWING LAST YEAR'S ELECTIONS IN FRANCE, AND SAYS DISCUSSIONS ARE EXPECTED TO CONFIRM THE COMMON GOALS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES ON THE INTERNATIONAL PLANE. "BELGRADE DOES NOT CONCEAL ITSEXPECTATION," BUDIMIR CONTINUES, "THAT THIS EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WILL LEAD TO COORDINATION OF THE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES ON THE INTERNATIONAL PLANE, AND THAT THE PRESENT TALKS IN BELGRADE WILL CONSTITUTE A BASIS FOR FUTURE MEETINGSAT HIGHER LEVELS."

4. COMMENT: DESPITE A HIGH DEGREE OF AGREEMENT ON MANY ISSUES, YUGOSLAVIA AND FRANCE HAVE FOR A CURIOUS HISTORICAL REASON UP TO NOW MAINTAINED RELATIONS WHICH WERE MORE PROPER THAN WARM. THE REASON: CHARLES DE GAULLE WAS A ST. CYR CLASSMATE AND REPUTED FRIEND OF DRAZA MIHAJLOVIC, WHO LATER LED THE CETNIKS AND, DESPITE THE INTERVENTION OF DE GAULLE AMONG OTHERS, WAS EXECUTED BY TITO AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II. ALLEGEDLY DE GAULLE NEVER FORGAVE TITO AND BLOCKED WARM RELATIONS WITH THE YUGOSLAVS, A POLICY WHICH WAS NOT NOTICEABLY MODIFIED BY POMPIDOU. THIS BLOCK NOW SEEMS TO HAVE DISAPPEARED, OR AT LEAST THE YUGOSLAVS ARE ASSUMING IT HAS. THE RESULT ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL BE CLOSER BILATERAL RELATIONS AND, MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, CLOSER COORDINATION OF POSITIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. ALSO, TITO HAS LONG WANTED TO VISIT PARIS, AND IF BUDIMIR IS TO BE BELIEVED (AND WE THINK HE CAN BE) THIS WOULD NOW SEEM IN THE CARDS TOO.

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